

KANARA

CHAPTER I.

'DESCRIPTION'.

North Kanara,¹ the southernmost part of the Bombay Presidency, lies between 13° 55' and 15° 31' north latitude and 74° 9' and 75° 10' east longitude. It has an area of 3910 square miles, a population in 1881 of 421,840 or 107·85 to the square mile, and a land revenue of £95,289 (Rs. 9,52,890).

Bombay Kanara is called North Kanara to distinguish it from South or Madras Kanara from which, because of its close trade connection with Bombay, it was separated in 1862. It is a belt of country about 110 miles from north to south and from ten to sixty miles from east to west. For about forty miles in the north Goa comes between it and the sea, and for twenty miles in the south it stretches between the sea and Maisur, a belt only about ten miles broad. The sixty miles in the middle are wild and picturesque, a country of great variety and richness of scenery, with a breadth of from forty to sixty miles. This Central Kanara includes three belts, a coast tract with broad winding lagoons, rich plains, and wooded hills running to the sea; a central belt of the lofty Sahyádris covered with magnificent forest; and an eastern upland, which is wild, waving and thickly wooded in the west and in the east passes into a bare level and thickly peopled plain. Kanara is bounded on the north by Bidi in Belgaum; on the east by the Dhárwár, Kalghatgi, Bankápur, and Hángal sub-divisions of Dhárwár and by Maisur; on the south-east by Maisur; on the south by Maisur and South Kanara; on the west by the Arabian Sea and Goa; and on the north-west by Goa.

For administrative purposes North Kanara is distributed over eight sub-divisions, with an average of 488 square miles, 157 villages, and 52,780 people.

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Boundaries.

Sub-Divisions.

¹ Compiled from materials supplied by Messrs. A. R. Macdonald, C.S., and R. E. Candy, C.S.

² Kanara or Kannad means the Black Country. It is formed from the two Kanáreso words *kare* black and *nádu* country. The black or black-soil country, the true Karnátak, is the plain that slopes east from the Sahyádris. The name was probably given to the coast by travellers who found that the language was the same as in the Karnátak and that the coast was under the ruler of the black-soil plains. Haig Nádu or the land of the Haiga Bráhmans is its local name. It was known to Ptolemy (A.D. 150) as Lymirike, apparently miswritten for Damurike, that is the Damil or Tamil land.

North Kánara Administrative Details, 1881-82.

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Sub-Divisions.

SUB-DIVISIONS.	AREA.	GOVERNMENT.						POPULATION, 1881.	POPULATION TO THE SQUARE MILE.	LAND REVENUE.
		Villages.		Hamlets.		Total.				
		Inhabited.	Uninhabited.	Inhabited.	Uninhabited.	Villages.	Hamlets.			
<i>Coast.</i>										£.
Kárwár ...	281	61	...	170	...	61	170	47,742	169-00	11,071
Ankola ...	367	90	3	102	...	93	102	34,189	93-15	9068
Kumta ...	230	120	6	331	...	126	331	58,758	255-46	12,122
Honávar ...	446	140	...	606	...	140	606	85,625	191-08	15,972
<i>Upland.</i>										
Supa (Haliyál) ...	979	237	32	187	...	269	187	61,154	62-40	10,603
Yellápur ...	589	152	22	108	23	174	181	36,814	61-65	9559
Sirsi ...	779	279	20	441	11	209	452	62,400	89-10	17,176
Siddápur ...	239	95	...	550	40	95	590	35,658	149-19	9054
Total ...	3010	1174	83	2490	79	1257	2569	421,840	107-85	95,239

There are no alienated villages in North Kánara.

Aspect.

Most of Kánara is hilly and thickly wooded. A somewhat broken and irregular range of central hills divides the district into two parts, the Uplands or Bálághát with an area of nearly 3000 square miles, and the Lowlands or Páyanghát covering about 1300 square miles.

Except the shallow Kárwár and Belikeri bays in the north, the seventy-six miles of the Kánara coast stretch in a long nearly straight line to the south-south-east. Though unbroken by deep bays or wide-mouthed estuaries, the coast is varied and picturesque, with rocky islands and rocky capes, stretches of palm-fringed sand-beach, low narrow river mouths, and rough bluffs and headlands. Always behind the changing coast-line stretch rich winding valleys, waving woody hills, and a wild back ground of high peaks.

The Coast.

The coast begins in the north with a bay seven miles long and over two miles deep, stretching from the steep woody rock of Lolía in Goa 300 feet high to the magnificent block of Kárwár or Baitkul head with a height of 650 feet. In the middle of this bay the double-peaked Oyster rocks, about 160 feet high, lie off the mouth of the Kálinadi or Sadáshivgad river, which has the steep bluff of Sadáshivgad fort on its north bank, and to the south-west the two rocky islands of Narsinhgad (120 feet) and Kurmagad (180 feet). Two miles south of the river mouth, sheltered on the south and south-west by the great bluff of Kárwár head, is Baitkul cove, in which lies the modern town of Kárwár. A mile off shore, about three miles south-east of Kárwár head, is the pretty island of Anjdiv, where, between 1662 and 1664, three hundred of the four hundred English troops who were sent to take possession of Bombay perished.¹ Inland, four miles south-east of Kárwár head, rises Gudehalli peak 1800 feet above the sea. Along the coast a succession of rocky capes and sandy bays, with an inland range of hills 1700 feet high, leads about eight miles south-east to the steep rocky cape of Kodárgudda.

¹ Details are given under Anjdiv.

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The Coast.

South of Kodárgudda, Belikeri bay, with a sweep about three miles deep, stretches seven miles to Kusaldevar or Gangávali rock about 550 feet high. In the Belikeri bay, about three miles north of Gangávali head, is the entrance to the Ankola creek, with the black-tipped peak of Tulsi Parvat, 1800 feet high, four miles to the north-east. Two miles beyond Kusaldevar, in a sandy shore, is the shallow winding mouth of the Bedti or Gangávali river. Five miles south-east of the Gangávali river, close to the sandy shore, are the temples and sacred pools of Gokarn, according to Bráhmaṇ geographers the southmost point of the Konkan. About a mile south of Gokarn, in a deep bay between Kadmigudda point (430 feet) on the north and the old hill fort of Rájmandurg (300 feet) on the south, is the narrow rocky entrance to the long inland lagoon of the Tadri river. About six miles south-east of the Tadri river are the small cape and the shallow open roadstead of Kumta. About six and a half miles further south is Basrádurg, a level brushwood-covered island with remains of fortifications. Two miles south is the narrow entrance to the large salt-water estuary of the Gersappa or Honávar, river. From Honávar the coast stretches south high and broken by many little capes, about sixteen miles to Jálíkond or Hog Island, a pyramid-shaped rock about 300 feet high and a mile from the coast. Out at sea, nine miles west of Jálíkond, the woody slopes of Netráni or Pigeon Island rise about 300 feet. About four miles south-east of Jálíkond, on a rocky point at the mouth of a little river, stands Bhatkaldurg, a place of historic interest and the southmost port in the Bombay Presidency.

In these seventy-six miles of coast, besides the mouths of smaller streams, there are four main inlets, the Kálinadi or Sadáshivgad river, about four miles from the extreme north; the Gangávali or Bedti river about twenty miles south of the Kálinadi; the Tadri or Mirján river about six miles south of the Gangávali river; and the Gersappa or Honávar river about sixteen miles south of the Tadri. Though their mouths are generally narrow and barred with sand, these rivers spread into broad lake-like estuaries, studded with woody islands, and, as navigable tidal rivers, pass from twelve to twenty miles inland. Their shores are fringed with marsh-bushes, and behind the bushes are patches of salt-pans, groves of cocoa-palms, and belts of rice land. The patches and belts of palm garden and rice land are small, confined to valleys which wind sometimes among low bare hills from 200 to 300 feet high, and sometimes between rugged and woody spurs from 1000 to 2000 feet high that stretch from the central range close to the coast.

The ascent of the central range of the Sahyádris is over a succession of low hills, separated by lowland and upland valleys, whose basins are crowded with spice and betel gardens. Above the gardens the lower slopes lead, through a dense belt of forest, to a waving plateau, generally wooded, but in places bare or under tillage. Above the plateau the rugged scarps and waterfalls of the higher slopes are hid by magnificent forests. The average height of the crest is 2000 feet, but occasional bluffs and peaks, rising a

Central Kanara.